

March 2, 2010

Water Acquisition Committee  
**Draft** Conference Call Summary  
February 24, 2010

Participants: Dan Luecke, Matt Lindon, Paul Abate, Brent Uilenberg, Ed Warner, Steve McCall, Michelle Garrison, John Shields, Tom Pitts, Malcolm Wilson, Jana Mohrman, and Angela Kantola.

Assignments are indicated in the document in bold, preceded by a ">".

1. Review/modify agenda – The agenda was modified as it appears below.
2. Aspinall EIS/PBO – Steve McCall said the **PBO** was completed in December and calls for peak, base, migration, and fish ladder flows (based on hydrology). The final EIS is in process and Reclamation hopes to complete the ROD in 2010, at which point they can implement the preferred alternative to help meet the flow recommendations. In the meantime, operations will be similar, but not exactly like those in the preferred alternative. The Biology Committee has begun discussing monitoring requirements as outlined in the PBO (see attachment 1). A study plan to evaluate effects of operation (this is separate from the Selenium Management Program due in late 2011) is due by December 2010. Angela Kantola said the Program Director's office did not call for new monitoring in 2011, assuming any new monitoring would be identified in the study plan and implemented in 2012. Steve added that some of the monitoring in the study plan likely is already ongoing.
3. Approve December 2, 2009, meeting summary – The summary was approved as written.
4. Review recommended revisions/assessment of RIPRAP and draft FY 2011 work plan and prepare comments for the Program Office and Management Committee – Angela Kantola reviewed the process for assessing and revising the RIPRAP and making any needed changes to the FY 11 work plan (second year of a 2-year work plan). The Committee reviewed and commented these documents as captured below and in comments on the RIPRAP tables (which Angela will compile for the Management Committee along with comments from the Biology and Information & Education committees).

Green River flow protection: Interim steps need to be in RIPRAP. The Committee suggested the following (which still need to be discussed by the Utah water acquisition team): 1) complete daily time-step model by July 1, 2010; 2) analyze demand scenarios under various flow conditions (by Jan 1 2011); 3) review options for legal projection of flows (X in FY 11); and 4) implement flow protection (X in 2012 and ongoing). All reaches will be approached as a package; therefore, subsequent Green River flow protection sections need to reference the first section.

Price River: >Jana, Tom Chart, and Paul Abate to determine whether March deadline is feasible.

5-yr Yampa review: >Michelle Garrison is meeting with Ray Alvarado and Andy Moore next week on this topic and will provide information to the WAC and Angela Kantola no later than March 15 for Angela to incorporate into the WAC's comments for the Management Committee..

Duchesne work group meeting March 3 will review progress and due dates, then >Paul Abate will provide changes to the WAC and to Angela no later than March 15 for Angela to incorporate into the WAC's comments for the Management Committee. Tom Pitts asked Paul to have that group address whether additional water is needed on the Duchesne. Paul said that with the completion of the Myton Diversion rehabilitation, they now can better assess flow sources and what else may be needed.

White River – Dan emphasized that the environmental groups believe we need to address peak flows on the White, not just baseflows.

Colorado River - Tom Pitts noted that CWCB/WAC should prepare work plan by October 1, 2010 for calculating new depletions under 15-MR PBO (should be easier this time, but also need to look at what is new vs. what are historic depletions). The Committee discussed 15-Mile Reach flow protection. >Jana will provide the WAC with the latest pie charts from the River District (*done, see below*). Without Ruedi and with OMID water, timing may still be concern and we may not have enough water in very dry years; however, Brent Uilenberg said he thinks the charts may be understating available water (see Attachment 2). *Note: revised pie charts reviewed by Reclamation and the River District included in e-mail with this draft summary.*

Brent Uilenberg noted he's working with the Service and the Upper Basin and San Juan Recovery Programs regarding development of permanent fish rearing ponds at Horsethief Canyon (to replace leased ponds which haven't been very effective). For supply water, they're looking at an infiltration gallery that will pick up shallow alluvial water from the Colorado River below the confluence with the Gunnison and will be filing for a water right. (If the Biology and Management committees concur with constructing these ponds, it will be reflected in a change to the RIPRAP under propagation).

Gunnison River - Michelle and Leslie noted that the 3x/year Aspinall coordination meetings will continue.

RIPRAP text – no changes.

FY 11 work plan budget table – Angela outlined budget constraints. The Committee had no recommended changes at this time.

>Jana will revise the recommendations for report #70 to read “Michelle Garrison is working with the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center (CBRFC) to provide a hydrologic prediction.”

5. Utah's WAT updates – Modeling members of the committee next meet March 23, then the full committee on April 23.
  - a. Utah's sufficient progress letter – Utah sent a letter to the Service (Julie Lyke) outlining plans for Green River flow protection.
  - b. USFWS objection to Blue Castle's nuclear plant, in Green River, UT – Matt said USFWS, Blue Castle, and Kane County may want to request an extension of the

comment period from the State Engineer's office since we're waiting for results from the modeling on which to base decisions. Jana said the Service objected to this change application for ~50,000 af of unperfected water moved upstream from Lake Powell area (largest proposed single depletion since the Program's inception). Blue Castle would like the Service to drop its protest by next Monday, but the Service wants to wait until the modeling is done. Kane Co. is willing to offer the Service a 10,000 af pool for fish, but the Service will need to see something in writing. The Service, Reclamation and Blue Castle attorneys are meeting tomorrow morning to discuss this further. The Service is working on additional written comment to their protest. As soon as she has something in writing, >Jana will share it with the WAT and WAC. Dan Luecke said the modeling effort and overall flow protection needs to be worked out first, then the Blue Castle application addressed. Malcolm said Reclamation is similarly concerned with the timing. As these are rights that would be moved from San Juan tributaries up the Green River, the State likely has concerns, as well. The Committee agreed that resolution on Blue Castle can't be rushed through before addressing the larger Green River flow protection issue.

6. 10825 update – Tom Pitts said water users have developed a 2-component alternative: 1) Ruedi continued use of 5412.5 much as in the past (West Slope); 2) 5412.5 releases from Granby Reservoir (provided to Granby via conversion of an old irrigation right). (East Slope). The NEPA process began last fall and now is into technical reports, assessments, and hydrological analyses. Tom said he believes they've found a way to address issues regarding flows in Frying Pan River (Basalt economic interest for trout anglers). Interim agreements are in place with Denver and the River District to release water from Wolford and Williams Fork through July 1, 2010; those agreements will be extended, probably through 2013. Permanent agreements will be in place by the PBO deadline. NEPA compliance likely won't be completed until mid-September.
7. Ruedi legislation update – Tom Pitts said the Ruedi component will be responsibility of West Slope, and the water users are proposing legislation to make provision of that water non-reimbursable in terms of both capital costs and O & M costs. Tom posted draft legislation to the fws-listserver this morning and is soliciting comments. This topic will be on the upcoming Management and Implementation committees' conference call agendas.
8. CFOPS update – Tom Pitts said the team is now organized and will be moving forward shortly with goal of completing Phase III report by September 30, 2010.
9. OMID – Brent Uilenberg said they're drafting the various contracts, are continuing monitoring at the reregulating reservoir site, and have gotten preliminary cost estimates approved. The process is somewhat stalled until Colorado can indicate their level of financial participation (likely in March).
10. Sediment report review schedule:  
2/8/10 USGS Sediment Report was given to Recovery Program staff and USGS supervisors (Jana). PD's office has suggested some revision before it goes to peer review, so subsequent schedule (below) may need to be revised:  
3/8/10 Report submitted to Biology/Water Acquisition Committees for 45 day review. Peer review will be for 30 days. Currently peer reviewers include; Scott Wright (USGS), John Pitlick (CU), Kirk LaGory (Argonne), and Bob Mussetter (Tetra Tech?).

4/8/10 Peer review due

4/22/10 Biology/Water Acquisition Committees' reviews due

~6/8/10 Revised report to Biology/Water Acquisition committees for joint review/approval

11. Revised draft flood elevation for Cameo dropped half a foot from NWS's last draft – The Service has been asking for a revision to the flood elevation (to 13 feet), but NWS's latest draft dropped it to 12.5 feet based on concerns from the Town of Palisade. The Service is asking NOAA not to drop that half foot as no physical property is significantly affected and because the 13 foot elevation is important to achieve CROS goals to protect flows for the endangered fish.
12. Update on Colorado River operations in 2009 (see attachment 2). >Brent and Jana will look at CRWCD's pie chart and Brent's attachment and determine if we're correctly reflecting the water being provided and what we anticipate will be provided through OMID. *Done.*
13. Schedule next WAC conference call – April 21, 9-11 a.m.

## Attachment 1

### **New demands/needs for research, monitoring and other projects from Aspinall PBO**

#### **Recovery Program Obligations under the PBO:**

**Monitor fish populations in Gunnison River:** Program monitors pikeminnow populations and is developing a basin-wide razorback monitoring program to include monitoring of multiple life stages. Monitoring program design is expected to be completed in fiscal year 2010. Implementation to begin in 2010 and include multi-life stage monitoring on the lower Gunnison. Density estimates will be developed for Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker in the lower Gunnison River.

**Collect tissue samples during monitoring:** During fish community monitoring in the lower Gunnison River, tissue samples will be collected from razorback suckers, as well as a chosen surrogate species, to determine selenium concentrations.

**Assist in development of Study Plan to evaluate effects of Aspinall reoperation and how it improves habitat & contributes to recovery.** Complete within one year of PBO. Include an evaluation of the effects of reoperation on critical habitat in the Gunnison River and Colorado River from the Gunnison River confluence to Lake Powell. Focus on previously identified uncertainties related to geomorphic processes, floodplain inundation, and temperatures:

While relationships among initial motion, significant motion and streamflow are well defined, duration of flows necessary to accomplish habitat work is not completely known. Because flow duration recommendations were developed based on a wet period, the recommended durations require a large volume of water that may not always be available.

Water availability may limit the ability of the Gunnison River to meet the Flow Recommendations under certain conditions.

Because of timing and other differences in runoff patterns of the Colorado and Gunnison rivers, it is difficult to predict the effect of Gunnison River flow changes on the Colorado River.

The trade-off facing Colorado pikeminnow between stream bed maintenance and temperature regime in the Gunnison River is an uncertainty that may need to be evaluated by the Recovery Program.

The Recovery Program may need to evaluate the trade-off between high spring flows and base flows needed during the mid- to late summer to operate Redlands (and, to a lesser extent perhaps, maintain movement of sediment through the system).

**Conservation Recommendations:** (Discretionary agency activities to minimize/ avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.)

**Selenium:** Recovery Program initiate investigations to determine appropriate levels of selenium to insure recovery of Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. Any new studies would follow established Recovery Program protocol for priority and funding.



ATTACHMENT 2

GRAND VALLEY WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT

RESULTS

	Water Year									
	1998 1/	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Average
	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet	Acre-Feet
Irrigation Diversion	285,217	240,424	252,289	256,289	249,318	277,994	245,927	249,223	206,105	247,196
Reduced Diversion as Compared to 1998 (Pre-Project)	0	44,793	32,928	28,928	35,899	7,223	39,290	35,994	79,112	38,021
Palisade Pipeline	0	2,053	10,161	13,654	19,143	10,812	10,625	15,997	18,302	12,593
<b>Total Potential Benefit to 15-Mile Reach Flows</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46,846</b>	<b>43,089</b>	<b>42,582</b>	<b>55,042</b>	<b>18,035</b>	<b>49,915</b>	<b>51,991</b>	<b>97,414</b>	<b>50,614</b>
<b>HUP Surplus Water Deliveries to the 15 Mile Reach</b>	NA	<b>0</b>	<b>47,525</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31,200</b>	<b>22,822</b>	<b>32,743</b>	<b>61,433</b>	<b>56,290</b>	<b>31,502</b>

1/ The 1998 water year was chosen to represent preproject baseline conditions as all Salinity Control Program improvements were in place and a full water supply was available to the Grand Valley Water Users Association.